

Columbia Falls Aluminum Reduction Plant Site

National Priorities List ("NPL") Fact Sheet

April 2016

Commented [A1]: As I read the text, this title seems to be too broad for the subject matter which is examples of reuse/redevelopment – Suggested title – Superfund redevelopment in Montana

The decision to list the Columbia Fall Aluminum Reduction Plant Site on the final NPL is approaching. Once listed on the final NPL, that decision cannot be reversed and the site will not be taken off the NPL until the project is completed.

Commented [A2]: Suggest, "expected fall 2016"

Site redevelopment, job creation and increased tax revenue are being cited as reasons to list the site on the final NPL. Contrary to the expectations of some in Columbia Falls and elected officials, historical experience of Montana NPL sites show the opposite is true. Case studies in Montana show that final listing of the site on the NPL does not lead to redevelopment that brings high paying jobs and tax revenue.

Commented [A3]: Science and data are also cited as reasons, i.e. the contamination and potential risks to human health and the environment.

Commented [A4]: This is vague. Expectations of some? Do expectations belong in a fact sheet like this? Recommend delete.

Research using EPA information indicates that, although a few NPL listed sites in Montana have been partially reused, these projects have not brought significant jobs and tax revenue to local communities. Where reuse has occurred, most projects are parks, a golf course or public buildings:

Commented [A5]: Suggest: "Case studies demonstrate how sites in Montana are being reused and redeveloped and the potential for economic renewal."

Commented [A6]: This is vague. Suggest citing sources rather than saying "research using EPA indicates." Also, not sure that the research was sufficiently extensive.

- There are 18 sites on the NPL in Montana; none have ever been removed from the list. With the exception of a small power plant that created 11 jobs, industrial reuse has not occurred at any Montana site that was finally listed on the NPL.
- Industrial redevelopment has occurred at one Montana site proposed for NPL listing but never put on the final NPL: The Burlington Northern Livingston Shop Complex was proposed for NPL listing in 1994 but the listing was never finalized. The site is now used for switching and temporarily holding rail cars.
- Parts of four of the 16 final NPL sites in Montana have been redeveloped:
 - o Milltown Reservoir Sediments Site, Milltown: The State of Montana opened a park on the former reservoir site. In addition, the Clark Fork Coalition, a not-for-profit conservation organization, has opened a sustainable cattle ranch and learning center on the property.
 - o Anaconda Smelter, Anaconda: A government authority built a golf course funded, in large part, by site owner ARCO. In 2014, the golf course requested additional funding from ARCO to continue operations¹. A regional prison was developed on part of the site. NorthWestern Energy constructed a natural-gas-fired electric generation facility on the site that employs 11 people.

Commented [A7]: This sentences seems slanted. Suggest: "NPL listed sites in Montana show a wide range of reuse and redevelopment potential of Superfund"

Commented [A8]: This is explicit in the previous statement.

Commented [A9]: This sounds dismissive.

Commented [A10]: Industrial use is just one indicator of redevelopment success. Many factors are involved in determining reuse including site factors and public interest. Just because the reuse is not industrial, doesn't mean it isn't a viable use for the site.

Commented [A11]: Suggest adding content to your site descriptions. I've added my suggestions to Libby and Milltown to demonstrate the kind of changes I'd recommend.

Commented [A12]: Suggest: "A massive flood in 1908 washed millions of tons of mine waste from upstream mining operations into the Clark Fork River and deposited them behind Milltown Dam. Sediment contaminated with arsenic, lead, zinc, copper, and other metals settled at the base of the dam and remained there for over 100 years. The site was added to the National Priorities List in 1983 after arsenic groundwater contamination was found in the Milltown area and cleanup work began in 2006.

The Milltown cleanup project engaged an active local community and federal, state, and tribal partners. Over three million tons of contaminated sediment and the Milltown Dam were removed and a natural river and floodplain were re-created. Inspired by the vision of the public, the site now features a 500 acre state park that provides recreation opportunities and habitat for wildlife. On a bluff overlooking the confluence of the Clark Fork and Blackfoot Rivers, interpretive signs chronicle the Milltown cleanup and celebrate the region's history and heritage.

¹ http://mtstandard.com/news/local/old-works-golf-course-may-close-permanently/article_481b3795-d730-59db-beff-e7698e968e78.html?utm_medium=social&utm_source=email&utm_campaign=user-share

- Silver Bow Creek, Butte: A park with a sports complex, baseball fields, a driving range and volleyball courts has been created on the site. A memorial to those who died in Butte area mines also has been erected.
 - Moat Industries, Columbus: The Town of Columbus built a public works building and parking area on part of the site.
 - The Libby Asbestos Superfund Site: Operable Unit 1 which was the former WR Grace Export plant is now Riverfront Park. This park has two boat ramps for locals and outfitters alike to fish the Kootenai River. It hosts the well know Blues Fest. Many weddings, family functions and entertainment takes place on a regular basis. Operable Unit 2 has also been completed and is in reuse. Part of this is commercial property and part of this is a large residential property. Even within the active operable units there has been many cleanups and businesses are in full operation and growing. As well as over 2000 homes and businesses have been cleaned and in use.
 - The EPA has designated two Montana NPL sites as “ready for reuse” Only one has been developed so far:
 - Moat Industries, Columbus: This is the same site as described above. The Town of Columbus built a public works building and parking area on part of the site.
 - Idaho Pole, Bozeman: EPA and the local community have coordinated to redevelop the site. There has been no redevelopment at this time.
 - The EPA is trying to help other sites develop but despite planning and other activities at these sites, they have yet to be redeveloped:
 - East Helena Site, East Helena: In 2011, the EPA Superfund Redevelopment Initiative funded a community planning charrette and reuse planning process that produced a “revitalization concept plan” for the site. The site has not yet been redeveloped.
 - Libby Groundwater Contamination Site, Libby: The EPA and the state are working with businesses and officials of the Kootenai Industrial Park to support reuse of the area. This is also located within Operable Unit 5 of the Libby Asbestos Superfund site.
- A finger jointer operation is back up and running after new owner ship has started the business back up. The operation closed down due to economy, not the superfund sites.
- A post and rail manufacturer who employs a half a dozen people and creates approximately \$2.5 - \$5 million in revenue each year.

Commented [A13]: Suggest: “The Libby Asbestos site is located in Libby in Lincoln County, Montana and was contaminated by asbestos as a result of vermiculite ore mining operations that began in the early 1920s. Asbestos from the mine resulted in extensive contamination of indoor and outdoor air, soil, indoor dust, vermiculite insulation and building materials in around the City of Libby. Since 2000, EPA has completed investigations and removal work at the majority of properties located within the site.

EPA finalized the cleanup plan for this portion of the site in 2010, completed construction in 2012 and participated in a ribbon-cutting ceremony with community members in 2013 for a new park and pavilion known as Riverfront Park. Today the park serves as a place for community gatherings and celebrations and serves as a boat launch for locals and outfitters. Other parts of the site are in reuse with commercial property and a large residential area.

Commented [A14]: Another example of the overall slant to this fact sheet. suggest: “one has been redeveloped so far.”

Commented [A15]: This sounds slanted. suggest: “The EPA is also working with other sites for redevelopment.”

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A bridge welding manufacturer had started operations which was scheduled to hire upwards of 200 people. Plant closed due to untimely death of owner in a plane crash.

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<u>Montana NPL Sites Redevelopment Activity</u>				
Site Name and Location	NPL Status	NPL Listing Date*	Site-Wide Ready for Anticipated Use? **	Redevelopment Activity
<u>Industrial use</u>				
The Burlington Northern Livingston Shop Complex	Proposed	n/a	n/a	Train yard switching and train storage
<u>Some redevelopment with a few jobs and some tax revenue</u>				
Milltown Sediments, Milltown	Final	September 8, 1983	No	State Park, cattle ranch and learning center
Anaconda Smelter , Anaconda	Final	September 8, 1983	No	Golf course, prison and power generating station
Silver Bow Creek/Butte Area, Butte	Final	September 8, 1983	No	Park and sports facilities; a monument
Moat Industries, Columbus	Final - Ready for Re-use	June 10, 1986	Yes	Town of Columbus Public Works Building
<u>Government planning and coordination but no redevelopment yet</u>				
Idaho Pole, Bozeman	Final – Ready for Re-use	June 10, 1986	Yes	Government coordination
East Helena Site, East Helena	Final	September 21, 1984	No	“redevelopment conceptual plan” developed in 2011
Libby Groundwater Contamination Site, Libby	Final	September 8, 1983	No	Government coordination

Montana NPL Sites Redevelopment Activity				
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No Redevelopment Activity				
Libby Asbestos, Libby	Final	October 24, 2002	No	None
Barker Hughes Mining District, Monarch	Final	September 13, 2001	No	None
Basin Mining Area, Basin	Final	October 22, 1999	No	None
ACM Smelter and Refinery, Black Eagle, MT	Final	March 10, 2011	No	None
Montana Pole and Treating, Butte, MT	Final	July 22, 1987	No	Construction of remedy complete – no redevelopment
Flat Creek IMM, Superior, MT	Final	September 23, 2009	No	None
Lockwood Solvent Ground Water Plume, Billings, MT	Final	December 1, 2000	No	None
Upper Tenmile Creek, Helena, MT	Final	October 22, 1999	No	None
Smurfit-Stone Mill, Frenchtown, MT	Proposed	n/a	No	None

* From <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/national-priorities-list-npl-sites-state#MT>

**From <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/search-superfund-sites-where-you-live>